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Multifaceted Management of COVID in the Medical Student Population of Sidney Kimmel Medical College

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Introduction

COVID has created hardships in the lives of many persons. In a time of chaos, it was clear our institution needed an efficient workflow to track all students requiring quarantine, so that academic progress and student wellness would not be casualties.

This presentation reviews that workflow in detail, for the purpose of sharing strengths of the process for the greater GSA/OSR network's benefit.

Importance/Need

Mandated student quarantine was necessary for safety. It also created a difficult situation involving various stakeholders, with requirements:

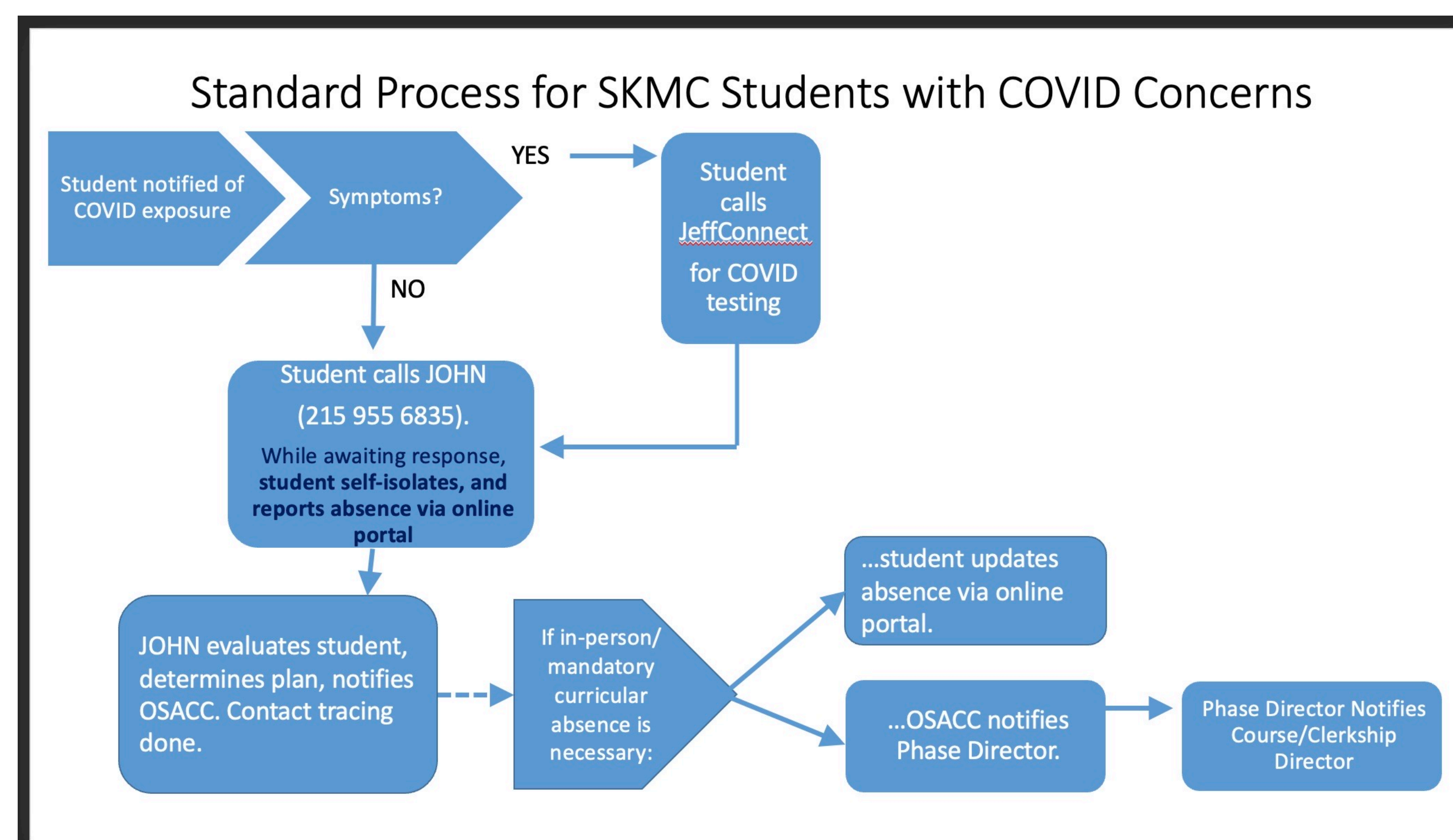
- Process had to respect and maintain FERPA and HIPAA
- Workflow had to be completed expeditiously in real time to decrease confusion and burdensome messaging/email flux

Leveraging the unique position of the Office of Student Affairs, a communication process chain was created - ensuring effective maintenance of student academic progress, health privacy, and wellness.

Stakeholders

- Medical students (preclinical and clinical)
- Jefferson Occupational Health Network (JOHN)
- Academic Affairs (preclinical and ward instructors, administration)
- COVID Steering Committee/Contact Tracing Team
- City Department of Health
- Office of Student Affairs and Career Counseling

Communication Algorithm



Flow Diagram of Process, July 2020. In brief:

- Jefferson Occupational Health Network (JOHN) evaluated all students for COVID-like illness. It had institutional authority to mandate and clear all students from quarantine.
- JOHN notified students and a designated dean in the Office of Student Affairs of quarantine plan
- Student Affairs spoke with student, reviewing quarantine procedure, academic absence documentation, and wellness resources for students in mandated quarantine
- Student Affairs communicated daily by report with Academic Affairs, confirming mandated student absences, while maintaining FERPA and HIPAA (no COVID status relayed, only that quarantine necessary). Potential classroom/clinical rotation exposures were also communicated by Student Affairs.
- Student Affairs maintained data concerning all student quarantine days, status, and clearance in concert with JOHN.
 - COVID positive students were referred to institution COVID contact tracing team
 - Student Affairs managed demographic data mandated by Department of Health

Data

Example of internal spreadsheet records kept by Student Affairs. Data redacted for privacy.

From July 1, 2020-April 4, 2021

- Total student encounters processed by JOHN: ~460
- Students cleared by JOHN immediately (no quarantine necessary): ~80
- Total student quarantine days: ~2700
- Peak students on quarantine simultaneously: 33
- The contact tracing/record keeping model used by our institution became the model employed by the City of Philadelphia

Conclusions

The unique role of Student Affairs in the medical college afforded natural advantages in managing:

- confidential medical data,
- related emotional stress,
- liaison with academic affairs,

While being the advocate for the student throughout, the very touchstone of our role.

This model could be replicated in other situations of emergency requiring delicate management of protected information on a large scale.